

An Attic... Salt-Shaker

CHATTER WEEKLY SUGGESTS OF STORIES ABOUT FAMOUS PEOPLE

BY W. ORTON TEWSON

SHEARER ENQUIRY

Continued from page 10

Due to the prevailing flood of memoirs by—more or less—eminent persons, the question is often asked—sometimes not without reason: "Did so-and-so actually write the memoirs published under his name?"

Which reminds me that when Louis XVIII, after the return of the Bourbons, published "Le Voyage a Coblenz," doubts were expressed as to the real authorship of that book. Whereupon a Paris critic wrote that the matter was not worth discussing. "If the volume was written by the King," he said, "it is above criticism; if not the work of His Majesty, it is below criticism."

Many authors dedicate their books: "To My Mother." Much less often do you find on the flyleaf: "To My Wife." I have been told, by those in a position to know, that when hardened criminals are getting a taste of the east-o-nine-tails—as they still do in England, for instance—they frequently call for their mothers, never for their wives.

Far be it from me to draw a parallel between criminals and authors, or mothers and wives. No, sir. But why dedicate at all? Someone has said: "It always seems to me to be perilously near an indecent soul exposure."

I recall but one author who got around the mother and wife poser in his dedication. He was Thomas R. Marshall, former Vice-President—brilliant diplomat if ever there was one. This was the amusing dedication to his reminiscences: "To the Two Women Who Were Uninjured in the Fall of Edson, my Mother and my Wife, I lovingly Dedicate This Book."

Oscar Wilde never forgave Chicago for the fun poked at him by the newspapers during his visit there on his famous lecture tour. Years afterwards when Mrs. Reginald de Koven first met Oscar in London at the home of a friend, he demanded in a loud voice after the presentation had been made: "Where in the world do you come from?"

"I was born in Chicago," replied Mrs. de Koven. "There was a look of horror in his expression," says Mrs. de Koven (in "A Musician and His Wife"), as he answered: "Never, no, never; your parents have deceived you!"

If ever a distinguished visitor—and, after all, as we know his work today, Wilde was distinguished—invited ridicule that visitor was Oscar Wilde. Take his meeting with the newspaper men in Chicago. He received them at his hotel reclining on a buffalo robe, clad in pastel garments, knee breeches, and long silk stockings. Then while he sipped tea, he told them what he thought of Chicago.

And this is what he said, in part: It is reported in "Chicago: The History of Its Reputation," by Henry

Justin Smith and Lloyd Lewis. "Your machinery is beautiful. Your newspapers are comic, but never amusing. . . . Your water tower is a constellated monstrosity. . . . Your city looks positively dreary to me." He closed his eyes at the mention of the stockyards and "looked sick."

In telling of his experiences on the lecture platform in America, Oscar Wilde used to relate that the week previous to his appearance at Denver a man had been shot in the very hall in which he—Wilde—lectured there while he had turned his back on the audience for the purpose of examining a chromo-lithograph.

"Which shows," Wilde would add, "that people should never look at chromo-lithographs."

Then there is the story of a party, at which Wilde was present, when the discussion turned on who really discovered America. An aggressive New Yorker repeated more than once: "I tell you, sir, that it was the great Columbus who first discovered our great country."

Wilde softly inquired whether a certain Don Amerigo had not given his name to the Continent just before Columbus discovered it.

Still the New Yorker persisted. "I see," sighed Wilde. "Of course, you must be right, though I fancy I can explain the anomaly. Don Amerigo discovered it first, but it was hushed up."

That W. S. Gilbert—of Gilbert and Sullivan fame—was exceedingly touchy in matters affecting his personal dignity is well-known. He once complained to Sir Arthur Pinero, the playwright, of the rudeness of a barber who came to his house to cut his hair.

"What do you think the impertinent fellow dared to ask me?" said Gilbert to Pinero—who tells of the incident in "The Eighteen-Seventies." Pinero said he didn't know and Gilbert went on:

"Why he said: 'When are we to expect anything further from your fluent pen, Mr. Gilbert?'"

"What do you mean, sir," thundered Gilbert to the well-intentioned but unfortunate barber: "What do you mean by 'fluent pen'? There is no such a thing as a fluent pen. A pen is an inanimate object. And, at any rate, I don't presume to inquire into your private affairs; you will please observe the same reticence with regard to mine."

Which recalls the story about Mark Twain who was being shaved by a talkative barber. Having completed the performance the barber ran his hand professionally across the chin and posing the razor above Mark's face, said: "Shall I go over it again?" "No-o-o," said Mark, slowly, "I've heard every damned word."

To go back to W. S. Gilbert: Sir Arthur Pinero gives his version of a very well-known Gilbertian story. Here it is: Gilbert as a briefless barrister, nil

ed in his time by writing and became a staff member of "Fun"—"Punch's" rival. It was in "Fun" that his "Bab Ballads" first appeared. They had been turned down by F. C. Burnand, the then editor. Gilbert never forgave Burnand and years afterwards when then met at a dinner-party, Gilbert overheard Editor Burnand remark, with pride: "All the good things come to 'Punch'."

"Then why the devil don't you print them?" snapped Gilbert.

Contrary to common belief George Sand, eccentric novelist, did not bob her hair as a defiance of the conventions but as an act of sacrifice upon the altar of love. The ironic truth (revealed in her "Intimate Diary") is that she cut off her ringlets in order to send them to her poet lover, Alfred de Musset, hoping that the sight of them might melt his temporarily chilled heart. But her reward was criticism and ridicule.

Another entry in the Intimate Diary of George Sand—made nearly one hundred years ago—reads: "I'm glad I don't care for spinach, for if I liked it I should eat it, and I cannot bear spinach."

Whereupon the great writer is no different from a little fellow I know who came to visit his grandmother for the first time. As he crossed the threshold where his adoring relative was waiting to receive him with open arms, he looked up into her face and hisped: "I don't like spinach."

Daniel Webster liked nothing better than to laugh. So stored was his mind with humorous anecdotes that the slightest touch was enough to set it off. Was the day hot? Then this was one of Dr. Danforth's days. What, some one would ask, is Dr. Danforth? Webster would explain (chuckling) Allan L. Benson in his biography of the great statesman, lawyer and orator) that there once lived in the vicinity of Marshfield—Webster's country place, south of Boston—a very irascible old doctor named Danforth.

One day, happening to be at a funeral, Dr. Danforth bent down to the ear of an old gentleman and whispered: "It is a warm day, Mr. Jones?" Mr. Jones being more than a trifle deaf, whispered back: "What did you remark?"

"It is a warm day," was the reply. "I am very deaf and did not understand you," whispered the old gentleman.

"I said it was as hot as hell; do you hear that?"

Webster's hobbies were fishing and the enormously costly one of "practicing the art of agriculture." He loved Marshfield—which was near the sea—where he raised big sheep, big cattle, and big fields of grain. He liked to break an ear of corn in two (says Mr. Benson) and put the halves in the mouths of two fat steers.

"I like to be out here feeding the stock," he once said to his son Fletcher. "I would rather be here than in the senate." Then smiling a little he added: "I think it is better company."

It is remarkable (but not to a fisherman) what an attraction fishing has always had for statesmen. One of the most ardent anglers, Lord Grey—better known as Sir Edward Grey—recently told an amusing story about a London angler who, spending a few days in the country, found himself unable to sleep because of the quietness. So he arose and went fishing.

As he passed the village church, the clock chimed three.

"Talk about 'em being up early in the country," he soliloquized. "This is where I put one over on these early rising birds."

Just then, turning a sharp corner, he came face to face with a farmer. "Good morning," said the Londoner, to bite you want to go home!"

On Thursday morning, all Hearst papers carried a two-column repudiation of Shearer on page one. The article, signed by Mr. Hearst, states that he had no knowledge of Shearer's connections with the shipbuilders, and discharged him the moment he discovered it.

When asked to be specific about his newspaper affiliations at the Geneva conference, Shearer explained that Henry Wales, of the Chicago Tribune gave him two cards which would identify him with the New York Daily News, which is owned by the Chicago Tribune. He produced the cards at the hearing.

At the adjournment of the committee, Senator Allen made it known that the committee is by no means through with Shearer. It is his own opinion, he said, and not that of the Committee, that neither Hearst nor the Chicago Tribune publishers will be called to testify. The committee seems satisfied with the promptness of the denials made by all against whom Shearer has lodged charges.

AUTHENTICITY OF "FRENCH DOCUMENT" DENIED

Probably the most important piece of evidence from a news standpoint offered by Shearer was a so-called "Secret British Document," the authenticity of which has been denied by Sir William Wiseman, a New York banker, whom Shearer called the chief of British spies in America, as well as the naval intelligence of this country. Its contents have not been made public.

Practically everyone indicated by Shearer in his rancorous, ruthless testimony, has denied his charges specifically.

William Randolph Hearst in Los Angeles Wednesday issued a statement regarding Shearer's employment by his newspapers, which said in part: "The editor of the New York American employed Mr. Shearer, among many others, to write articles on the league of nations and the world court, and also to help in organizing whatever opposition there might be to the league of nations and the world court into a public petition to congress."

"The Editor had no knowledge that Mr. Shearer was or ever had been in the pay of shipbuilding corporations—no more knowledge of this fact than congress at that time, or that the Republican managers had when they employed him to make speeches for the Republican party."

This letter from Colonel Frank Knox general manager of the Hearst newspapers, dispensing with Mr. Shearer's services, was also made public: Mr. W. B. Shearer, 45 Nassau St.,

"My Dear Mr. Shearer: In view of the fact that we were totally unaware of your financial arrangements with shipbuilding companies, under which you were paid a salary for certain propaganda work you were doing for them, and inasmuch as this arrangement of yours which you now for the first time make public, obviously destroys your usefulness as a newspaper man associated with independent newspapers, we wish to accept any further news articles or contributions from you for publication in the columns of our newspapers, or to continue your employment in any capacity in connections with our newspapers."

"Nice morning?" "Ay, it be," said the farmer. "But it were cold first thing."

Another loyal disciple of Isaak Walton's was President Cleveland. W. H. Crane, beloved actor, used to tell the story of a day's fishing participated in by President Cleveland, Joseph Jefferson, and himself. They fished all day and caught nothing. About six o'clock Cleveland got a little trout, and Jefferson, who was ready to drop, suggested: "Now, that we've got a fish, let's go home."

"You're the strangest man," retorted Cleveland. "Here we've been fishing all day, and just as they begin to bite you want to go home!"

"We would have been relieved of the necessity of taking this step if you had been frank enough to inform us in the beginning of your connection with shipbuilding firms. "Kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter."

"Yours very truly, (Signed) 'FRANK KNOX, "General Manager."

Wythe Williams, Geneva correspondent of the New York Times during the naval disarmament congress in 1927, who cabled from Berlin on Tuesday night a denial of statements made that day before the Senate committee by W. B. Shearer, including Shearer's allegation that Williams had been instructed by the acting managing editor of the Times to ascertain whether Shearer, in returning from Geneva, would pass through British territory and had given him a friendly warning not to do so, cabled to the Times yesterday a further message about the letter which Shearer included in the Senate committee record as having been sent to him by Mr. Williams. When he wrote his earlier reply Mr. Williams had not seen the text of this document. After having received it by cable in Berlin he sent the following: "Concerning the letter I wrote to Shearer I now remember he called at my hotel during my absence just before he left Geneva and left word he was sorry he could not say good-bye. I then sent a note to him (I believe by messenger) and expressed my regret at not having seen him, wishing him well and thanking him for whatever he had done for me. The letter was intended for Mrs. Shearer as much as for himself, to thank her for hospitality on several occasions."

"My letter may have been written on the stationery of the International Club, to which Shearer as well as all correspondents, belonged, and letter-heads of which all of us had a plenty. The context, as quoted, appears to be a reconstruction in part of what I may have written, but in its entirety, and particularly as to the views ascribed to me in the latter part, I deny it emphatically. Before admitting authorship of such a document I would have to see the original.

"My personal relations with Shearer were certainly as cordial as those I have had with scores of persons we meet in our profession and work with or through for professional returns but, again referring to the letter in question, I could not have used such phraseology contrary to my opinions.

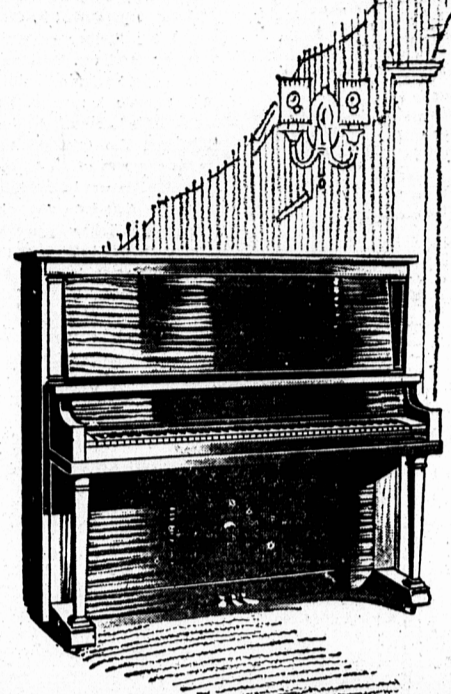
"I repeat that all information supplied by Shearer used in my dispatches also received verification from representatives of the American delegation.

"I wish further to state most emphatically that Mr. Birchall at no time during the Geneva conference, which I covered throughout, mentioned Shearer's name to me by mail or cable. Therefore, Shearer's declaration that Mr. Birchall instructed me to find out how Shearer was leaving Geneva, as well as my warning him not to proceed by the Suez or through any British territory, is a lie.

"What I do remember about this so-called 'warning' is that Shearer toward the end of the conference came to my hotel and with a show of agitation—I wondered then whether it was feigned or real—said had been threatened and indicated that the threat came from British sources. He also told me this tale about not returning home via Suez. I did not take much stock in it but sympathized with him and asked him how he did propose returning to the United States, which question he declined to answer."

The letter which Shearer claims he received from Wythe Williams follows:

HEINTZMAN PIANOS



If you think you are unable to afford a HEINTZMAN . . .

SHORT time ago a woman looked at the price tag of a Heintzman Piano and exclaimed "How I want a Heintzman . . . I love its appearance . . . such marvellous tone . . . but I can't afford it."

But she made the purchase when she learned more about the Heintzman Piano and how easy it was to own one.

Heintzman Pianos are built for the future. Your children's children will practice their scales and baby pieces on it. It will be the same beautiful piano for years to come.

Such superiority of construction naturally costs a little more . . . but isn't it well worth it!

Visit our show rooms. See the charming models on display. And settle the piano question forever.

Possession is easy. Small down payment—and 30 months to buy.

Ye Olde Fin MILLER BROS LTD. CHARLOTTETOWN

International Club, Geneva, Switzerland, Aug. 30, 1927.

"My Dear Shearer: I understand you may be leaving soon, and as I shall be so tied up covering the league council meetings I may not see you again in Geneva. Therefore I send you this note merely to thank you again for the much accurate information you were able to supply not only to me, but to all the American correspondents. During the recent tri-power navy conference that at least was one conference the United States did not lose, for which, I am convinced, thanks are due to the Press quite as much as to the delegation.

"Apropos—when you get to Washington, do let me have a line of inside dope on how the situation stacks up, Navy I mean. From this distance it appears that our public is at last aroused in peace time as well as in war. Will it remain on this track, or will the Pacifists, reformers, and other species of sellers-out finally prevail?

Will the United States fulfill its destiny and become the Great American Empire, or will it eventually merely be a rich industrial adjunct to England? I'd like to get over there. I've got the European background, since before the war, and I know how they hate us, and I'm sick of them, heartily 'Nuf said.

"My very best to the family, sincerely, WYTHE WILLIAMS.

Albin E. Johnson explained his connection with the much-discussed Scotland Yard dossier on Shearer in a cabled dispatch to his newspaper, the New York World, on Sept. 29. The document, Mr. Johnson said, was available in Washington as well as in Geneva in 1927 and Shearer's record was known to American naval officers. When the latter refused to share this information with newspaper men,

word was spread that Johnson had the dossier in his possession. Several newspaper men refused to take Shearer seriously after learning of the Scotland Yard charges and after that incident there were no further contacts between Johnson and Shearer during the naval conference.

While Shearer stated that he remained in Geneva after the meeting ended for the sole purpose of "mopping up" Johnson and the dossier, Johnson states that Shearer met him one day at the Quai Mont Blanc and said that he wanted the document, and a list of the correspondents who had been warned against him. Having no further use for the information, Johnson relates, he turned it over to Shearer voluntarily.

"At the same time that he was given the dossier," Johnson concluded, "Shearer threatened to expose on the floors of the Senate and House this correspondents as a British propagandist. He declared that he had at his command many Senators and representatives who would make charge unless I ceased writing articles telling of the activities of the big navy group.

"This correspondent in turn congratulated Shearer as the most effective propagandist encountered in years of newspaper work on two continents. When Shearer again evaded revealing his employers by saying: "That's nobody's damn business," I assured him that no matter what I salary might be, \$10,000 or \$50,000 it was not enough."

The New York Times made specific reply to Shearer's resurrections of the often-refuted charge of "mopping up" Johnson and the dossier. All read into the record the statement ownership and circulation printed by the Times as a complete rebuttal of the propagandist's utterance. The Times commented in printing testimony that Mr. Birchall is not an editor, but is acting managing editor and that one of its dispatches cited by Shearer as having been written by Edwin L. James, was in fact written by Percy L. Phillip, Paris correspondent.

Bucharest, Rumania, is to have talking pictures.

An efficiency expert has figured out that to fit up some of the old English hotels with hot and cold running water would cost at least \$125,000.

Don't Trifle with Bronchitis

There are few "colds in the head" that do not extend into the bronchial tubes and they often develop into bronchial congestion or bronchitis. Many cases become serious and last for weeks and there is always a tendency for bronchitis to become chronic and return again and again. For this reason you cannot afford to neglect any cold and should take quick action at the first indication that the cold is entering the bronchial tubes. Dr. Chase's Syrup of Linseed and Turpentine is at once the most prompt and most effective treatment you can secure. Dr. Chase's Syrup has long since proven its exceptional medicinal value and should not be confused with ordinary cough mixtures.

DR. CHASE'S SYRUP OF LINSEED AND TURPENTINE

—By George McManus

Advertisement for Aspirin. Includes illustration of a hand holding a bottle and a woman in pain. Text: "Needless Pain! Some folks take pain for granted. They let a cold 'run its course.' They wait for their headaches to 'wear off.' If suffering from neuralgia or from neuritis, they rely on feeling better in the morning. Meantime, they suffer unnecessary pain. Unnecessary, because there is an antidote. Aspirin tablets always offer immediate relief from various aches and pains we once had to endure. If pain persists, consult your doctor as to its cause. Save yourself a lot of pain and discomfort through the many proven uses of Aspirin. Aspirin is safe. Always the same. All drugstores with complete directions." Logo: ASPIRIN TRADE MARK.

BRINGING UP FATHER

